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Item No. 1**JACK ANDERSON and DALE VAN ATTA**

CIA Faces the AIDS Epidemic

The Central Intelligence Agency has finally decided that it has to deal with the reality of the worldwide epidemic of acquired immune deficiency syndrome. The agency has sent out urgent warnings to all its agents and has begun routine testing of applicants, employees and their families to identify carriers of the deadly virus.

Earlier this year, the CIA issued a special alert to its spies in 15 countries, warning them to be more careful about their sexual contacts—whether recreational or on the job—with individuals who might have the disease. The countries of highest risk were identified as Haiti, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, West Germany, the Central African Republic, Congo, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

We've obtained an internal report by the CIA's Office of Medical Services, which reveals that the agency "began routinely testing" employees and job applicants last February. It has been using two laboratory procedures, both of which check for the presence of antibodies to the AIDS virus, which is easier than detecting the virus.

The first procedure is a blood test called ELISA, for enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay. If the test result and a retest are positive, the Western Blot procedure is then used. "Should the Western Blot read positive, a second blood sample is drawn and the entire three-step procedure is repeated," the internal CIA report states.

"Like any laboratory test, there are false positive and false negative results," the report adds. "By doing two different procedures and repeating them

with a new sample, the chances of a 'false' report are minimized. Nevertheless, the implications of a 'positive' test are potentially devastating, and for this reason every effort is made to insure the utmost accuracy of the report and protection of the patient's confidentiality."

The spy agency's medical officers are testing three specific groups, according to the internal report:

- "1. Applicants for employment.
- "2. Employees and dependents over age 18 who have physical examinations for official purposes [such as posting abroad].
- "3. Those recommended by a staff physician—[such as] persons who received transfusions of blood products in the period 1978 to the spring of 1985, hemophiliacs and selected other individuals."

The CIA has established a "protocol," or set of administrative courtesies that are extended to individuals "who have a confirmed positive test" to the AIDS virus, now known as HIV, for human immunodeficiency virus.

"Any such individual will be be informed directly by an agency physician, and the information will remain medically confidential," the report states, adding:

"Applicants testing positive will be counseled but disqualified from agency employment. If an agency employee or dependent is HIV-positive, comprehensive counseling and further medical evaluation will be made available. Depending upon the state of HIV infection, overseas assignability would be limited as appropriate."

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JACK ANDERSON and DALE VAN ATTA

James Bond in the Age of AIDS

Pillow talk can be expensive; it can cost you your life, the CIA has warned its secret agents around the world. The danger, of course, is AIDS.

The problem is that, unlike officials of other, less devious agencies, the CIA brass hats can't take the straight-arrow approach and urge their spies: "Just say no." The CIA is well aware that an undercover agent is sometimes exactly that, extracting information from susceptible, seducible targets who get carried away in the passion of the moment.

Even the KGB's notorious Delilahs must be growing a little nervous these days as the AIDS epidemic spreads inexorably throughout areas of East-West confrontation.

Faced with this mission-versus-medicine dilemma, the CIA's Office of Medical Services has come down on the side of protection.

"AIDS is 100 percent preventable," secret agents and other employees were assured in a bulletin issued in June. "Scientists who study the transmission of disease point out that the pattern of HIV (human immunodeficiency virus, the current name for the virus) dissemination has been well investigated, and the virus relies entirely on sexual contact, parenteral infusion or perinatal circumstances. Were it otherwise, the types of patients seen would be different."

So, the CIA medical bulletin explained, "while an AIDS vaccine or a disease cure is not yet a reality, preventive measures are very effective."

The bulletin offered seven precautions agents can adopt.

The first rule: "Do not participate in unprotected vaginal intercourse unless it is within a stable relationship; otherwise use condoms and spermicide." But this could easily rob the boudoir opportunity of the very spontaneity that has disarmed the quarry.

Second: "Avoid any intercourse with high-risk individuals or individuals from high-risk areas of the world." Following this sensible advice would place Africa and most of Europe off limits, as well as rule out gay men and intravenous drug users.

Third: "Do not accept any transfusion of blood or any blood product that has not been screened for AIDS." That's fine if the agent needs a pint of blood in Switzerland, but not in a Third World clinic where doctors have neither the equipment nor know-how to test for AIDS antibodies.

Fourth: "Do not accept any treatment involving a needle or injection unless you are certain the facility uses sterile disposable needles." Again, this is a bit unrealistic in many parts of the world.

Fifth ("Avoid unprotected anal intercourse") and sixth ("Be aware that oral-genital contact carries a risk of transmission") offer no special obstacles to the clever spy, while Rule No. 7 is merely common sense: "In a situation where a potential sex partner may be infected, assume they are."

In short, the CIA bulletin warns: "Know your partner."

In the espionage game, the idea is to get to know your target well. But asking a potential paramour to take a test for the AIDS virus may not be an agent's most productive followup to "What's your sign?"

BROOM HILDA RUSSELL MYERS

